

Annotated Bibliography of Grey Literature Review

for

International Cooperation in Small Cities: New Directions and Innovative Local Practices in British Columbia

IDRC Project No. 107467-00020199-038

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Besser, T. L. and Jarnagin, S. K. (2010). *Corporate Social Responsibility: Small Businesses and Small Towns* (History of Corporate Responsibility Project Working Paper No. 5). Minneapolis: Center for Ethical Business Cultures located at the Opus College of Business, University of St. Thomas. Retrieved 15th May 2016 from: www.cebcglobal.org.

This paper reviewed previous studies on the social responsibility of small businesses in small towns. One of their main findings was that the obligation of business management to work for community and societal betterment is proportional to the size of the business and the size of the city where they are based. Small business owners are more socially and economically embedded within the community in which they operate than are managers of big businesses. Moreover, in small towns, they are more visible than similarly sized businesses in metropolitan locations. For this reason, the size of towns is a key intermediary variable between the size of a business and the level of social performance. As a result of “their greater embeddedness and visibility, small business owners in small towns are likely to conform to the local patterns of civic engagement” (p. 3).

In the paper the relevance of small towns is stressed. Small towns are here considered municipalities with 10,000 or less inhabitants. According to the results of opinion polls conducted in the US, a fairly large number of people living in urban centres would live/return in small towns if economic possibilities would allow them (p. 6).

Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2014). *FCM International Relations Framework 2015-2018*. Ottawa: Federation of Canadian Municipalities.

This report promotes relationships between Canadian cities and local governments worldwide by advancing a three-year-long framework for enabling city-to-city cooperation. The relevance of cities of all sizes is stressed by the fact that “by 2030, two-thirds of humanity will have migrated from rural areas to live in urban settlements” (p. 2). Further, the FCM believes that cities and municipalities of all sizes are ideal for promoting sustainable economic growth. This is believed because cities are the closest government to the people and they have a “profound understanding of the assets and resources communities can mobilize” (p. 2). Consequently, there is the idea that local institutions and cities are the “key agents of change, knowledge and expertise—both domestically and internationally” (pp. 3-4)

Canadian municipalities and cities are presented as an example of success; Canadian cities are effective in delivering basic services and in involving different stakeholders in the local decision-making process. However, the paper states that all cities across the globe are facing some common challenges. In this regard:

“Although Canadian municipalities have been successful, they face the same issues as other local governments everywhere in the developing and developed world: shortages of resources, and inadequate fiscal and constitutional arrangements to effectively meet the needs of their citizens.” (p. 2)

The FCM envisions “an international municipal movement” (p. 2) and the report presents a framework that Canada should implement “to develop relations and activities to strengthen Canadian municipal engagement with municipal partners and networks around the world” (p. 3). This framework provides guidelines in four areas (p. 4-9):

1. Policy Influence – International Policy Development and Advocacy (e.g. dialogue between FCM and DFATD);
2. Development Cooperation – Municipal International Cooperation (e.g. Develop four new FCM programs to support local governments in Africa);
3. Trade and Investment Promotion – Municipal Economic Initiatives (e.g. Develop more relationships between FCM and Canadian organizations involved in trade promotion, economic development and investment attraction to promote the role of municipal government in trade);
4. Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency – Doing Better International Work (e.g. strengthen the roles and engagement of FCM’s Standing Committee on International Relations (SCIR) in FCM’s international work.) (4-9).

Pluijm, R. V. D. and Melissen, J. (2007). *City Diplomacy: The Expanding Role of Cities in International Politics* (Clingendael Diplomacy Paper No. 10). The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations *Clingendael*.

The paper illustrates the findings of a research on city diplomacy. As in 2007, for the first time in history the majority of the world population lived in cities (p. 6). The authors investigate the role of cities in the current international political diplomacy since it is believed that cities, along with other actors such as NGOs and corporations, are tackling the traditional state-state diplomacy. For example, they states that:

"[S]ince the end of the Second World War, actors other than the state have entered the diplomatic stage. These non-state actors could be divided into those with a non-territorial character, like NGOs and multinational corporations, and those with a territorial character, like states in a federal system, regions and cities." (p. 7).

Although the role of the state is still recognised as predominant, the process of globalization has paved the way to new non-state regimes of political, social and economic power that led to the inclusion of new diplomatic actors. Consequently, “[n]ew opportunities have been created for territorial non-state actors to become involved as the economic, cultural and political dimensions of globalization have worn down the state’s responsibilities and functions” (p. 8).

The authors suggest that cities are involved in a multilayered diplomatic environment where multiple actors engage in different ways. Specifically, the authors believe that

Contemporary diplomacy has, in other words, become more than anything else a web of interactions with a changing cast of state, city and other players, which interact in different ways depending on the issues, their interests and capacity to operate in this so-called multilayered diplomatic environment.

Using a 6-layered diplomatic framework, the authors then provide insights on the daily and growing role of cities in a new globalized diplomacy. Four main findings were found (pp. 33-34):

1. Cities seem to participate in almost every stage of international politics
2. A growing professionalization of cities’ international activities
3. There is a visible trend from idealism to pragmatism in cities’ diplomatic activities;
4. City diplomacy is still in its infancy.

Despite the many findings supporting the diplomatic role of cities, the authors recognize that there are still many challenges before we can consider city-to-city diplomacy.

Tacoli, C. (2004). *The Role of Small and Intermediate Urban Centres and Market Towns and the Value of Regional Approaches to Rural Poverty Reduction Policy*. Retrieved 26th April 2016 from: <http://www.oecd.org/dac/povertyreduction/36562990.pdf>.

This paper discusses the potential role of small and intermediate urban centres in regional and rural development. The study also clarified the problem of creating a standardized category of ‘small and intermediated urban centres’. She claims that in different geographic locations the category would be differently perceived since, for example, in many Latin American and European countries a small city is considered having a threshold of 2,000-2,500 inhabitants, while other nations use much higher thresholds (p. 3). The author applied a descriptive attachment to the category for which small and intermediate towns should be those smaller urban contexts with a specific set of purposes, services and economic roles in relation to their national context.

Although different theories on the topic are presented, which space from optimistic to highly-pessimistic, the author supports the positive potential role that small and medium sized cities

can play for their surrounding development. Four key contributions of small and intermediate cities were found (pp. 4-5):

1. Acting as centres of demand/markets for agricultural produce;
2. Acting as centres for the production and distribution of goods and services to their rural region;
3. Becoming centres for the growth and consolidation of rural non-farm activities and employment;
4. Attracting rural migrants.

Empirical evidence shows great variations in the way each small and intermediate urban centre fulfils these roles. Some factors affecting these variations are the landowning structures, the quality of transport and communications.

Throughout the paper it is also stressed how policies must focus more on these cities, not only for their regional development impact, but even because there is “a real risk that the process of globalisation may lead to the justification of a new concentration of activities in the large cities” (p. 24). The author suggests that policies should support smaller urban centres and increase their potential in linking peripheral needs with international networks.

Taylor, J. (2000). *NGOs in the city* (NGO Sector Analysis Programme Briefing Paper No. 2). Oxford: International NGO Training and Research Centre. Retrieved 15th April 2016 from: <http://www.intrac.org/data/files/resources/38/Briefing-Paper-2-NGOs-in-the-City.pdf>

This policy briefing paper explores the organisational characteristics and institutional relationships of the NGOs in the city. During a three-year period, they studied NGOs operating in five cities, namely Addis Ababa, Ahmedabad, Dhaka, Johannesburg and Lima. The relevance of the study was due to the increasing process of urbanisation and the need to understand if this process was changing the nature of urban NGOs. NGOs are believed to be key actors to report to urban problems such as poverty and “urban NGOs have become willing ‘partners’ in a new dialogue with local government and the state” (p. 1).

In their study they found out that a peculiar urban NGOs sectors in fact exist and that in this new context the efficiency of NGO work depends on close cooperation with other institutional actors within the urban environment. The engagement with other actors, such the city or the private sectors, was presented as a relatively recent phenomenon.

M'Bassi, E. (2004, April 2004). Capacity-building combined with seed money is what we want MIC to be about, in *Promoting local governance through Municipal International Cooperation* (Issue 21). Capacity.org, pp. 4-5. Retrieved 12th April 2016 from:

http://www.cib-ucig.org/sites/default/files/promoting_local_governance_through_municipal_international.pdf

This paper argues that there is an ongoing decentralisation process that is enabling municipalities to participate more meaningfully in local development. This phenomenon has been observed and studied by organisations involved in 'municipal international cooperation' (MIC). In order to best learn from existing partnerships, the paper presents four different experiences.

This source is the second example provided in the issue and it provides insight resulted from an interview with Elong M'Bassi, Coordinator of the Municipal Development Partnership (MDP) in Cotonou, Benin. He took a critical look at the current practice of MIC on the African continent, and explains how Northern partners should redefine their terms of engagement in order to provide more effective support for capacity-building.

According to M'Bassi, the local level is where there is chance for positive change in Africa. Specifically, he said local authorities "are the players who live and breathe democratisation" (p. 4).

According to him, the institutionalisation of an elected local government is the first step towards local development. However, there is also the need to meaningfully engage local civil society. He claims that current North-South city-to-city cooperation practices are not enabling such engagement.

He believes that there is the need to strengthen capacity building of local government in Africa and that city-to-city should be the tool to achieve this goal. In order to do so, there should be a skill sharing partnership where money is 'seed money' to convert theory into practice. Further, he suggests "to build a strong worldwide municipal movement that keeps local development on the agenda and puts local governments at the centre of development policies" (p. 4).

United Nations (2001). *City-to-City Cooperation: Issues Arising from Experience*. Nairobi: United Nations.

The main purpose of this report was to provide a coherent framework for analysing the different forms of city-to-city (C2C) cooperation and for learning from existing practices.

In the introductory chapter there is emphasis on the term city because "The term 'cities' is also frequently used loosely in international contexts" (p. 6). In the report they refer to cities in a broader abstract concept that could be translated as 'local authority' of any size.

The report defines C2C as “all possible forms of relationship between local authorities at any level in two or more countries which are collaborating together over matters of mutual interest” (p. 6). C2C is often used for decentralised cooperation - although they are similar concepts, they are different in the specifics. “Decentralised cooperation policies are based upon the principle of partnership and joint working between public authorities, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations, cooperatives, the private sector, and the informal sector, a principle which is increasingly being incorporated in C2C approaches” (p. 6).

The report presents an analytical framework that compares different C2C by categories. One of the lenses provided to compare C2C is by looking at the ‘Participating Partners’. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) are here presented as very valuable actors as they “are often key partners of the city authorities in assessing local communities’ needs and communicating these to officials, and their own international links and networks can be brought into play in advancing C2C initiatives. The ‘joint action’ approach to development projects promoted by Towns and Development focuses upon bringing together the respective strengths of cities and NGOs in combined action programmes” (p. 19) For example, in assessing a North-South city-to-city cooperation between Mutare (Zimbabwe) and Haarlem (Netherland), the UN defined the involvement of local NGOs at both ends as “fundamental” (p. 24). Further, the report presents the potential role of international development NGOs as facilitators of a C2C link.